
From: Zhen, Davis
Sent: Friday, July 29, 2016 4:00 PM
To: (b) (6)
Cc: (b) (6)
Fleming, Sheila; Grandinetti, Cami; Conley, Alanna; Knudsen, Laura; MacIntyre, Mark; Philip, Jeff; Holsman, Marianne
Subject: Re: Portland Harbor Community Coalition - Request for Extension on Portland Harbor Superfund Comment Period and Additional Public Hearing

Dear PHCC,

The EPA has received your requests to extend the public comment period from 90 to 120 days, and to schedule an additional hearing in August. We would like to thank you for your continued interest in the Portland Harbor cleanup.

The EPA will accept comments on the Proposed Plan for the Portland Harbor Superfund Site for 90 days (June 9 through September 6, 2016). This time period includes a 30-day extension required by law, as well as an additional 30-day extension, based on requests for additional time received by the EPA. We will include responses to all comments that are received during the official public comment period in a responsiveness summary that will accompany the final cleanup plan (also called the Record of Decision).

As you are aware, over the past 6 months, we have offered numerous Informational Sessions (and a webinar!) at different locations in the greater Portland area prior to the release of the Proposed Plan, specifically designed to foster robust discussion and information sharing. After the Proposed Plan was released, the EPA scheduled, publicized and promoted four (4) Portland Harbor Proposed Plan meetings. At each, EPA Portland Harbor Team managers, scientists and staff have been available for 7 hours per meeting to explain the Proposed Plan and answer technical questions. At each of these four meetings, two Proposed Plan presentations were delivered for those attending.

To make it easier and accommodate communities who speak languages other than English, interpretation services were made available for each meeting - upon request - and were offered at the June 24th meeting (in Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese) and at the July 20th meeting (in Spanish, Russian and Arabic). EPA also advertised a brief summary of the Proposed Plan, public meeting dates, and provided instructions to request interpretation services in Street Roots, the Oregonian, the Asian Reporter, the Skanner, KAHOH (Russian publication), Phương Đông Times (Vietnamese publication) and El Hispanico News publications. Additionally, the public meeting format and offer to provide interpretation services was discussed in email communication to Cassie Cohen, Erin Goodling, Edward Hill and Jim Robison on June 20, 2016. Also, despite not receiving any translation requests, a proactive measure was taken to produce materials in Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, and Chinese.

On July 6th a member from the PHCC requested and picked up Fact Sheets and a Glossary of Terms translated into Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese from the Portland EPA Office. While a Spanish fact sheet was unavailable at the time (it was being revised to include updated information) everyone may now access both the Fact Sheet and the Glossary of Terms in English, Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese and Chinese at <https://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/CLEANUP.NSF/ph/Portland+Harbor+Superfund+Site>.

Your recent letter (requesting an additional meeting) suggested that attendees would prefer to “make comments in front of EPA decision-makers and the general public” and that it would be “unfair for participants to go to a separate room to make their comments” is particularly confounding. During all 4 public meetings, a public comment room with audience was available. Commenters were able to express comments to the EPA hearing officer in a room that is open to others to listen to comments. In addition, private comment rooms were available. Members of the EPA Team

communicated the meeting format to Cassie, Erin, Edward and Jim in the June 20th email. Additionally, EPA staff communicated the meeting format to Justin Buri on July 13. Throughout the schedule, we have worked hard to make each public meeting as accommodating as possible for all communities. After early initial discussions with area groups and individuals, we specifically planned meetings to span work hours and evening hours, offering various locations and formats that allowed for oral comments in a public forum as well as in private for those more comfortable in that setting.

Then, based on real-time feedback received from various entities, EPA tweaked the format for our July 20th public meeting “on the fly.” Similar to your suggestion, the EPA presentation and public comment were held in the same room to allow for the public to make comments in front of an audience that included EPA managers and staff and the general public. We also continued to offer use the private oral comment room throughout the day.

While there were many opportunities for diverse communities to engage during the comment period, and despite repeated, focused efforts to publicize and communicate with organizations like yours and the PHCC about those opportunities, we hoped there would have been broader turnout to our Public Comment meetings. At this time, the EPA does not plan on scheduling additional public meetings. We encourage you and everyone wishing to comment on the Proposed Plan to submit your comments either in writing or by e-mail by the September 6, 2016 public comment deadline. Community input is a very important part of the cleanup planning process and we value public comments on the Proposed Plan. All forms of comment (written, e-mailed and spoken) are treated equally and will receive a written response when the Record of Decision is signed.

Sincerely,

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